## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection circuit.

- 2. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 3. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection circuit.

- 4. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection circuit.
- 5. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 6. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 7. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected by the selection circuit.
- 8. A camera including a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the camera comprising:
- a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured

distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions;

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection circuit; and

a driving circuit for driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the auto-focusing data value computed by the computation circuit.

- 9. A camera according to Claim 8, wherein the computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 10. A camera according to Claim 8, wherein the computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection circuit.
- 11. A camera according to Claim 8, wherein the computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-

value selected by the selection circuit.

- 12. A camera according to Claim 8, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 13. A camera according to Claim 8, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 14. A camera according to Claim 8, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected by the selection circuit.
- 15. A method of measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions by a distance-measuring device comprising the steps of:

selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions; and

computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

- 16. A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein the computing step includes setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 17. A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein the computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.
- 18. A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein the computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.
- 19. A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 20. A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an

aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.

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- 21. A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected.
- 22. A method of operating a camera including measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the method comprising the steps of:

selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions;

computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value; and

driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the computed auto-focusing data value.

23. A method of operating a camera according to Claim 22, wherein the computing step includes setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum

permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

- 24. A method of operating a camera according to Claim 22, wherein the computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.
- 25. A method of operating a camera according to Claim 22, wherein the computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.
- 26. A method of operating a camera according to Claim22, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtainedfrom a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 27. A method of operating a camera according to Claim22, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtainedfrom an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 28. A method of operating a camera according to Claim
  22, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the
  auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values

to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected.

29. A distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the distance-measuring device comprising:

means for selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions; and

means for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection means.

- 30. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 29, wherein the computing means includes means for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 31. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 30, wherein the computing means includes means for computing the

auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection means.

- 32. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 29, wherein the computing means includes means for computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection means.
- 33. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 29, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 34. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 29, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 35. A distance-measuring device according to Claim 29, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected by the selection means.

36. A camera including a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, the camera comprising:

selection means for selecting at least one first
measured distance-value by excluding second measured
distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined
distance value, from individually measured distance-values
to the plurality of distance-measured regions;

computation means for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection means; and

driving means for driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the auto-focusing data value computed by the computation means.

- 37. A camera according to Claim 36, wherein the computation means includes setting means for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 38. A camera according to Claim 36, wherein the computation means includes means for computing the autofocusing data value from a mean value of the at least one

first measured distance-value selected by the selection means.

- 39. A camera according to Claim 36, wherein the computation means includes means for computing the autofocusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by the selection means.
- 40. A camera according to Claim 36, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 41. A camera according to Claim 36, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 42. A camera according to Claim 36, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected by the selection means.
  - 43. In a distance-measuring device for measuring

individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein comprising:

a first program code unit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions, and

a second program code unit for computing an autofocusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

- 44. In a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 43, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 45. In a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable

program code units embodied therein according to Claim 43, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

- 46. In a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 43, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.
- 47. In a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 43, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.
- 48. In a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable

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program code units embodied therein according to Claim 43, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.

- 49. In a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 43, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not selected.
- 50. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein comprising:
- a first program code unit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value by excluding second measured distance-values that are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, from individually measured distance-values to the plurality of distance-measured regions;
- a second program code unit for computing an autofocusing data value in accordance with the selected at least

one first measured distance-value; and

a third program code unit for driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the computed auto-focusing data value.

- 51. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 50, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.
- 52. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 50, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.
  - 53. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for

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measuring individual distances to a plurality of distancemeasured regions, a computer usable medium having computer
readable program code units embodied therein according to
Claim 50, wherein the second program code unit includes a
program code unit for computing the auto-focusing data value
from a majority of the selected at least one first measured
distance-value.

- 54. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 50, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for autofocusing.
- 55. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for measuring individual distances to a plurality of distance-measured regions, a computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein according to Claim 50, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for autofocusing.
  - 56. In a camera having a distance-measuring device for

measuring individual distances to a plurality of distancemeasured regions, a computer usable medium having computer
readable program code units embodied therein according to
Claim 50, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves
as the auto-focusing data value when the measured distancevalues to the plurality of distance-measured regions are not
smaller than the predetermined distance value and are not
selected.